

LICENSING COMMITTEE

17 January 2018

Present: - Councillors Julie Young (Chairman), Roger Buston, Nick Cope, John Elliott, Dave Harris, Pauline Hazell, Mike Hogg, Darius Laws and Patricia Moore

39. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 19 July and 29 November 2017 be approved as a correct record.

40. Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy

The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Director of Environment on further changes and a further period of the consultation on the draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy. The key changes in the Policy were noted. The Committee were informed that, in general, the response from Hackney Carriage/Private Hire drivers and operators was good and the feedback positive. There was some discussion concerning the operation of the Convictions Policy in relation to convictions 10 years and older. Mr Ruder informed the Committee that DBS checks were made on all applications and convictions would be considered as part of the 'fit and proper' test regardless of their age. Mr Ruder also confirmed that all applicants have a right to appeal to the Committee and then to the Magistrates Court.

RESOLVED that the proposed amendments be approved and the outcome of the consultation be reported back to the Committee, with the matter being reported to Full Council in July.

41. HMRC Report

The Committee considered a report by the Assistant Director of Environment on HMRC's proposals to introduce 'conditionality' measures to certain licence applications. Mr Ruder explained to the Committee that this was likely to result in the Council having to check a new applicant's tax status before a licence could be granted. The Council already carried out a number of checks including those to determine a person's right to work and in principal checks on behalf of HMRC would not be a problem as long as the required checks were straightforward. The Committee were mindful with regard to the possibility of extra work for officers and the implications on staff costs. Mr Ruder informed the Committee that until the nature of the checks were known it was impossible to assess the actual impact but they would be designed into the application process.

RESOLVED that a formal response to the consultation document be sent as set out in the report.

42. Licensing Policy Changes January 2018

The Committee considered a report on an amendment to be made to the Statement of Licensing Policy in relation to off sales.

RESOLVED that the amendments be approved and to be included into the policy.

43. Royal Wedding Consultation

The Committee were asked to consider a report by the Assistant Director of Environment on a consultation document received from the Home Office concerning the relaxation of licensing hours for the Royal Wedding. The Government proposed to make an order under Section 172 of the Licensing Act 2003 to mark the wedding of Prince Henry and Ms Meghan Markle on 19 May 2018. The effect of the order would be to extend opening hours of licensed premises to 01:00 on Saturday 19 May and Sunday 20 May 2018 for the sale of alcohol for consumption on the premises and the provision of late night refreshment in on-trade licensed premises. In discussions on the likely increase in the number of people into the town on this date, the Committee also discussed the cleanliness of the town and the provision of toilet facilities for members of the public late at night.

RESOLVED that the relaxation of hours on the 19 and 20 May 2018 be supported and agreed.